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**From:** Maier, Brent  
**Sent:** Wed 2/3/2016 8:32:21 PM  
**Subject:** Fwd: RGJ - Reid: Nevada must accept assistance for copper pit cleanup

Please see attached.

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** "Mulvenon, Ryan (Reid)" <[Ryan\\_Mulvenon@reid.senate.gov](mailto:Ryan_Mulvenon@reid.senate.gov)>  
**Date:** February 3, 2016 at 3:06:44 PM EST  
**To:** "Maier, Brent" <[Maier.Brent@epa.gov](mailto:Maier.Brent@epa.gov)>  
**Cc:** "McDonough, Alexander (Reid)" <[Alexander\\_McDonough@reid.senate.gov](mailto:Alexander_McDonough@reid.senate.gov)>  
**Subject:** Fw: RGJ - Reid: Nevada must accept assistance for copper pit cleanup

Brent--for your records. Please share accordingly.

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**RGJ - Reid: Nevada must accept assistance for copper pit cleanup**

**Sen. Harry Reid**

**February 3, 2016**

For many decades, the Anaconda Copper Pit in Yerington has sat as an abandoned cesspool full of toxic substances – a dangerous and unwelcome burden for the people who live and work nearby. The federal government has long offered help in cleaning this highly contaminated site, but the state of Nevada – under several administrations – has continually resisted that aid. Now Governor Sandoval

is saying the state will resist even longer.

Late last year the Environmental Protection Agency, emphasizing the public health and environmental risks caused by the mine, once again proposed adding it to the National Priority List. This much-needed designation would make the site eligible for federal funding of 90 percent of the cleanup costs and help protect the community from the mine once and for all. In his response to the EPA's proposal, Governor Sandoval resisted, saying "that there is no imminent health concerns at the site that require immediate action."

The governor is wrong. As the EPA noted, the site continues to pose a significant risk to the health and economy of Yerington, and that is why Nevada must join with the EPA to clean the area and protect the community. Putting off the cleanup and doing nothing simply increases the risk of disaster or the release of toxic materials. Doing nothing poses exponentially greater harm to Nevada. We cannot put this off any longer.

In addition to expediting and funding cleanup, the designation would also help hold companies accountable for what their operations did to our health and environment. Nevada should give the EPA stronger legal leverage to keep potentially responsible parties like Atlantic Richfield Co. and Arimetco at the negotiating table and working on this property. They should be held responsible for the damage this mine has done and be held financially accountable for its cleanup.

I know that critics of this designation argue that the National Priority List will bring attention to the community. Any negative publicity is not about the cleanup, but about the toxic mine itself. The best solution is to finally rid the area of this dangerous mine and move past the decades of uncertainty it has brought the health and economy of Lyon County. This would give residents of Lyon County the opportunity for sound economic development, rather than a very large poisonous hole.

It is time to move on because the Anaconda Copper Mine's time has passed. The idea that it would ever be re-mined is simply a red herring. Copper prices have plummeted to the lowest they have been in a decade, effectively shutting the door on the possibility of this mine again becoming operational. We should be focusing on building the future of this community and its economy.

The Anaconda Copper Pit is not part of that future. Nevada must protect its citizens and its economy by joining with the EPA to remediate the site and rid the landscape of this lingering toxic former mine that has long since become worthless. The Anaconda Copper Mine should have been designated a Superfund National Priority site long ago. Nevada now has the opportunity to right this wrong and protect its citizens from a dangerous, contaminated mine. We need to put this long-ago mine in our rearview mirror.

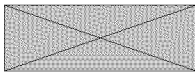
<http://www.rgj.com/story/opinion/voices/2016/02/03/reid-nevada-must-accept-assistance-copper-pit-cleanup/79768552/>

**Sara Miller**

Press Assistant

Senate Democratic Leader Harry Reid

Democratic Policy and Communications Center



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